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*Country* Neighbor

Free!  
March 2023

Inside, Sweeten your Coffee Break with Voices and Views from the Valleys of the Nemaha.

ONE OF THE BEST!!







Peru State College Ranked a  
Top School for Online  
Master’s in Business for 2023.



In February, 2023, there were over 1,000,000 snow geese at the Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge.

Auburn • Brownville • Cook • Falls City • Johnson • Nebraska City • Nemaha • Peru • Rock Port • Syracuse • Tecumseh • Verdon

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## *Your Country Neighbor*

*Voices and Views from the Valleys of the Nemaha*

Publisher & Photographer, Stephen Hassler

*Plus, peruse the happenings in a small town on pages 7,8,9,12*

P.O. Box 126  
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**www.yourcountryneighbor.com**

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## This Month's Writers & Contributors

Devon Adams 14  
Angela Allgood, Peru City News 7,8,9,12  
Stephen Hassler 2, 13  
Merri Johnson 4  
DiAnna Loy 9  
Dorothy Rieke 13  
Sheila Tinkham 15

Thank You!

*“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”*

# Ralph Waldo Emerson

*“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”* Maya Angelou

To track Covid-19, google; your **county**, your **state**, **covid**.  
(example) otoe county, nebraska, covid cases

***Wear an N95 mask per CDC guidelines.***  
***Wash hands often when out in public.***

## Here's the March Issue of *Your Country Neighbor*

Make this your “2-cups-of-coffee” companion, including local photos and articles with the flavor of rural America.

This issue has many photos of waterfowl and eagles taken in February at the Loess Bluffs National Wildlife refuge, as well as a couple of visitors to my birdfeeder, specifically, a Cardinal “couple.” See more visions of nature in a different medium on page 14.

Peru State Men's Basketball earned No. 2 Seed in Heart Tournament play with the win at Baker University, February 18th. PSC played #7 Graceland University at Home, Thursday, February 23rd, and won 78 to 56 to the pleasure of a large and supportive crowd. PSC advanced to host #3 Evangel University at Home, February 25th, winning the semifinal in an overtime thriller! And on February 28th in Oskaloosa, Iowa, PSC met #1 William Penn University for the *Heart Of America Conference* Championship. Hope you saw it! For results visit; [www.pscbobcats.com](http://www.pscbobcats.com)

Weather was mixed last week, and Winter is still here, but I am eagerly optimistic that March will be a good month all around.

Baseball and Softball seasons are under way and I'm looking forward to photographing home games later this month.

By now you shouldn't need any more hand-holding when it comes to vaccines and other prudent behaviors for virus prevention, but for helpful information, visit CDC online at [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov) for respiratory diseases and influenza reports for your state. Vulnerable folks need to continue to be cautious, especially when others are not.

Be careful driving, Winter is not completely over yet.

Don't forget to **clip the Valentino's coupon on page 20 (back cover)**, and carry it with you!

Stephen

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These taken at the Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge.



Bald Eagle, February 4, 2023



Bald Eagle with its nest at lower left. February 7, 2023



Eagle Also Shown On Cover Page, February 7, 2023



## Diary of a Part-time Housewife

Merri Johnson, Auburn

It has taken awhile, but I have finally begun purging playthings that our grandchildren have outgrown. Things that hold minimal sentimental value. Things that even I would consider trash, except that some of them were actually recyclable, so not quite trash, which made me feel a bit better about putting them in the recycle bin.

I should be embarrassed to admit that I am talking about a collection of empty plastic containers of one sort or another that our now 14 and 10-year-old grandkids used as tub toys. As toddlers, they simply had fun pouring water back and forth between the containers. At a little older stage, they used to line the containers up on the tub edge and pretend they contained magic potions or ingredients for use in concocting fanciful beverages, which they then served to me. They would probably be mortified to know that I am revealing their tubby-time antics.

It did hurt just a little to toss the ketchup bottle that was our granddaughter's favorite. (Don't laugh.) I can still see her holding that bottle under the water to fill it up and then squeezing it to create a fountain of soapy spray. That bottle was probably twelve years old. But it's gone now. Sigh.

Full disclosure: there is still a bag of actual tub toys in the bathroom closet. I can probably put those on a garage sale or donate them someplace... eventually.

The real challenge will be parting with the bigger toys in the basement. Play kitchen, play vanity, old school desk, art easel, doll cradle and high chair, farm toys, stuffed animals, Barbies. A few of those items actually once belonged to our son and daughter. I'm in no hurry to part with the family "heirloom" toys, but the other stuff is going to have to go if I'm ever going to utilize the space it is taking up for tidier storage of "adult" stuff.

Now that I think about it, a good deal of that adult stuff is serving no good purpose, either. I mean, do we need 50 feet of coaxial cable and various pieces of metal ductwork and PVC plumbing pipe leftover from our house construction? Or fishing waders that are at least two sizes too small? Or rain gear and insulated coveralls, also at least two sizes too small? I could go on. A creative person could probably construct an interesting piece of art or a Halloween character out of some of that stuff. Yours truly is not that talented.

I guess my problem is that my stuff has not accumulated to the level that requires me to get rid of some of it. Maybe I can just figure out a way to stack it up better and take up less floor space. Sounds like a good project for a rainy day. Until then, I will just take comfort in knowing that I have eliminated those plastic containers from my bathroom closet.

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**Tundra Swans are in record numbers  
this season at the Refuge.**



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More Bald Eagle Photos on page 3.

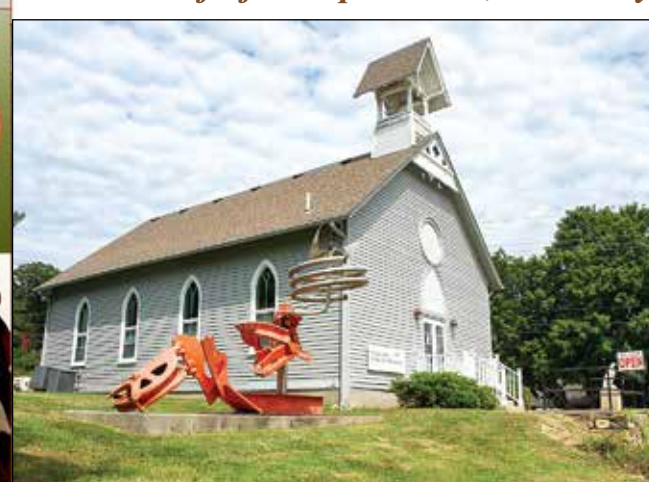
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This scene through my window on 5th street reminded me of a college student I knew long ago trekking up the hill from Elmwood Park to classes at UNO.



Cardinal in Thursday's snow, February 16.



Another member of the cardinal family; mate or sibling.



Peru's Water Tower below interesting cloud formation.



Waterline Construction west of Peru, February 15, 2023

## Peru Progress:

### Peru Organizations are Buzzing with Ideas!

Angela Allgood

1) PCIG (Peru Community Impact Group), met in February and have made a few changes to their Board of Directors. Vanessa Sherman has stepped down as chairman and Julia Perry is now Chair. Josie Coatney is Vice-Chair, Angela Allgood is Secretary, and Miranda Decker is Treasurer. Two new people and at-large members are Cate Wyckoff and Kirsten Reeves and member Stephanie Boden is also an at-large member. The Easter Egg Hunt will be April 1 (watch for more on this), Katy Wessels has taken over OMRD (Old Man River Days), again this year, Trunk or Treat will still be in October. Christmas will either be the 9th or the 16th of December. PCN will keep everyone in the “know” with all of these events! Other changes will be coming. Join a meeting and find out what is going on at PCIG!

2) Peru Depot Trailhead met in February and was also buzzing with excitement and changes. There were around 15 people at the meeting and it was chocked full of ideas and information. For those who don’t know, the Steamboat Trace is 20 miles (from Nebraska City, south to just past Brownville). There are two people, each from Peru, Brownville, and Nebraska City who are representatives on the Steamboat Trace Committee. At the meeting, we discussed what needed work down there and different grants we could receive to help fix those items up. We also talked about different things we would like to see down there (trash cans, electrical poles, etc.). Peggy Groff also wanted to know if the people at the meeting wanted to get the “Gandies” group going again. Peggy discussed that National Rails to Trails Day is April 22, 2023, National Trails Day is June 3, 2023 and the Grand Re-opening/Dedication of Steamboat Trace is June 3, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. The next meeting is February 26 at 5:00 pm. Please join us in helping to repair, open and make better our trail.

3) Peru is hiring for two job positions. A Grant Coordinator and a Deputy City Clerk. The deputy city clerk position is listed on Indeed.com. The Grant Coordinator position should be listed on Indeed.com soon. The position is currently advertised in the Nemaha County paper.

4) For those of you who use the Feeding 44 Food Pantry, you should know that it will now be serving Peru the first Friday of the month at 11:00 a.m. instead of the 2nd Friday at noon. <https://www.facebook.com/Feeding44/>

## Super Bowl Results

Angela Allgood

If you remember from my article in February about the Super Bowl, you will remember I asked a friend for his prediction of the outcome of the game. He thought the game would be between the 49ers and the Bengals with the Bengals taking the Super Bowl win. He did not predict correctly.

The Super Bowl ended up being between the Kansas City Chiefs 38 and the Philadelphia Eagles 35.

I asked my friend how he felt about that. He said he still watched the game with a group of friends, but he was not as invested in the game since his team did not make it. I heard that from a few different people. “They didn’t care” because, “their team wasn’t playing.”

If your team did or did not make it to the Super Bowl, I hope that you still enjoyed the game, the half time show, great friends and great Super Bowl snacks. And there is no way you didn’t like Chris Stapleton’s rendition of the National Anthem. I am a huge Chris Stapleton fan, and him singing the National Anthem sent chills up my spine.

## Support Peru City News!

Readers love the pictures, articles, poetry.

And

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**doesn’t get thrown away every week!**

Plus, there are 1500 - 2500

online visits per month at;

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(Over 125,000 hits annually.)

See page two for contact information.



## Downtown Revitalization Project

Angela Allgood

A Master's Program for UNL students is the Community and Regional Planning (CRP) program. Professor Abigail Cochran is the instructor and Dr. Zhengtong Tang is assisting with advising students and overseeing the development of the plan. The class is going to develop a downtown revitalization and greater economic development plan for the community. This downtown revitalization project started when Tom Bliss, Director of Southeast Nebraska Development District (SEND), connected the professors with Deborah Solie. Ms. Solie talked with the Mayor and got the approval to bring this project idea in front of city council.

What does this mean for Peru? Basically, this study helps Peru get more grants and funding for things needed. For example, with this study, Peru can apply for Community Development Block Grants.

On January 30, the students and professors met with many people who have an interest in the future of Peru and discussed the findings from an online survey that asked about what people wanted to see in Peru; buildings torn down, buildings built, stores they would like to see, etc. The survey was short and sent to businesses, Council members and a few others around town. They received 77 responses back from this survey which is a good turnout. Their survey came up with the same answers. We have inadequate housing, some homes are not properly maintained, no consistency in food options, and no employment opportunities, however, our strengths are the grocery store, walkability and the college.

The class will continue talking to residents and stakeholders throughout the process of developing their plan. They will return to Peru on March 27, 2023 so mark your calendars now. This meeting will be important as feedback needs to continue to make this plan a success.

Professor Cochran stated, "we are really glad to be working in Peru; the community spirit is evident."

## Working our way towards Auburn

Angela Allgood

You may be wondering what those blue tubes are out on the highway. Well ... they are part of the new water system linking Peru to Auburn.

I interviewed Brad Carstensen with Carstensen Contracting, Inc. "CCI" He had a lot of information that I could pass on to you, my readers.

Nate O'Bryan is the Project Manager for this job and Josh Keeler is the onsite Foreman with a 7-man Mainline and a 5-man Horizontal Directional Drilling Crew. What does any of that mean? Let's start from the beginning. Carstensen Contracting, Inc. won the bid for the project in September of 2022. They executed contracts, secured their material, staged pipe, and started pipe installation and boring shortly after Thanksgiving.

This project includes 10 miles of 8-inch high pressure restrain joint piping that will get Peru one step closer to getting hooked to Auburn's water system. Brad said that they already have six miles finished which is about 60% finished with pipe install. The company would like to be at least 95% completed with the piping by April 15th, so they can minimize any impact to the local farmers and their spring seeding operations. Brad stated that CCI makes it a priority when it comes to stripping topsoil and respecting the farmers property. He said pipe installation in and near Auburn will begin by March 15th to April 1st.

Outside of the pipe installation CCI has also contracted AHRS Construction, Inc out of Bern, Kansas to build a new Booster Chlorination Treatment Facility in Auburn and a new Metering/Control Building in Peru. He stated they are working hard to finalize all the facility submittals and final engineer approvals with plans to start foundations, site piping, and building work by April 1st time frame.

CCI has also contracted Rieschick Drilling Co. from Falls City, Nebraska to decommission several wells, Yost Excavating Inc. from Nebraska City to demo the existing facilities, Lincoln Winwater to supply piping and fittings, and several other local supplies/materials.

Barring 2023 doesn't bring any more natural disasters, pandemics, floods, or any excessive material shortages the Facilities & Pipeline will be operational by December 1st 2023. CCI appreciates everyone's patience and looks forward to providing a quality water system to Peru and Auburn.

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## Thank You Deborah Solie

Angela Allgood

Deborah Solie has done so many good things for Peru that it will be sad to see her go. Deborah has been the Disaster Recovery Coordinator (DRC) for Peru and was hired by LTRG (Long Term Recovery Group) in September 2020. LTRG could not supply the work needed to help Peru with the flood recovery, so they sought funding. They received funds from two Foundations in Omaha. The Kiewit Foundation and an anonymous foundation. Ms. Solie was originally funded to work a 12-month position but additional funding was approved to extend her term.

Deborah has worked with many people over the last 2.5 years to help build back Peru after the flood. She was hired to: 1) Coordinate the work of the Northeast Nemaha County Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG) and assist the City of Peru with disaster recovery efforts following the 2019 Winter Storm Ulmer and the flooding of the Missouri River. The Peru community and surrounding areas suffered an estimated \$7.91 million in economic loss, including \$4.2 million in agricultural revenue losses due to levee damage; 2) Build and maintain relationships with potential funding sources including

*Continued on page 9 >>>>*



## Tuesday Literary Club Reads

DiAnna Loy and Renee Szenasi, Tuesday Literary Club

For the Tuesday Literary Club's February meeting, Renee Szenasi looked at the movie "Glory" and the books Kevin Jarre's screenplay was based on, "Lay This Laurel" (1973) by Lincoln Kirstein and "One Gallant Rush" (1965) by Peter Burchard and the personal letters of Robert Gould Shaw, the leader of the first black regiment in the Civil War. Szenasi mostly referred to Burchard's book.

In February 1863, Robert Shaw was commissioned to command a colored regiment that was primarily recruited from the Northern states, especially Massachusetts. All of the commissioned officers would be white to make the colored regiment more palatable to the public and to the racist elements within the Army. The fear was that if the Negroes were armed, they might attack other civilians rather than fight the Confederacy.

On May 28, 1863, the regiment was sufficiently prepared for battle that they were sent off to the South. They arrived at Hilton Head, South Carolina on June 3rd and were immediately put to manual labor. The 54th would be ordered into a fight of sorts on June 11 when they took part in a raid on the town of Darien, Georgia. The raid was really an act of vandalism as women and children were burned out of their homes after all the valuables had been stolen. The 54th did see some small skirmishes in the Charleston area.

On the evening of July 18th, the 54th regiment was formed up to lead the assault on Fort Wagner. Around 7:45, Colonel Shaw, who was walking along the line, moved to the center and commanded his regiment, "Attention". The regiment then sprang to their feet and began moving forward. In all, over 1500 Union soldiers were killed, captured, or wounded in the assault, and the Confederates suffered less than 200 casualties. Only 350 men of the 54th were still standing by the time they retreated. Colonel Shaw, then only 25, was one of the casualties.

Though the Second Battle of Fort Wagner was a decisive defeat for the Union, it proved that black soldiers could fight just as hard as their white counterparts. In a large sense, the 54th's greatest legacy was the manner in which they served as a vanguard for further participation in the war by black soldiers. By the end of the Civil War, an estimated 180,000 black men served in the Army, an estimated 10% of all soldiers, and nearly 20,000 served in the Navy.

The movie, "Glory" is a 1989 American historical war drama film about the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, the Union Army's earliest African-American regiment in the American Civil War. The film depicts the soldiers of the 54th from the formation of their regiment to their heroic actions at the Second Battle of Fort Wagner.

Although the 54th was involved in combat operations until the end of the Civil War, the movie ends with its climatic, and unsuccessful, assault on Fort Wagner on Morris Island outside Charleston harbor on July 18, 1863, which resulted in the deaths of four officers, including its leader Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, and total casualties of 281 out of 624 engaged.

As a movie, "Glory" tells a wonderful narrative. There is struggle against racial oppression, personal strife and resolution, and heroic courage in the face of death. It has some of the best filmed Civil War combat sequences of any movie and it poignantly makes the point the creators desired that black Americans, along with their white officers, fought and died for their freedom in the Civil War. But, is it just a good story, such as so many Hollywood pictures, or is it good history? The answer is, actually, both.

Happy Reading!

<<<<< Solie, *Continued from page 8*

the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and USDA Rural Development. Evaluate and seek grants and other financial opportunities to advance disaster recovery; 3) Assist with disaster recovery priorities in Peru and Northeast Nemaha County including FEMA public assistance projects, hazard mitigation and flood-adjacent projects that better the community; 4) Represent the LTRG in the community and provide outreach, public relations and reports to citizens through town halls, business groups, other organizations, government entities about the disaster recovery process. Report at each meeting of the LTRG Steering Committee and City Council meeting; 5) Coordinate with Nebraska Extension efforts to bring a grocery store to Peru, lead community committee exploring options, and serve as liaison from the city for prospective buyers. Secure funds to incentivize grocery store entrepreneurs.

Ms. Solie's contract ended February 28, 2023 but, "Many of these projects are still in process, and having someone in the DRC position to help oversee them would be of great benefit to Peru" stated Amy Mincer, Administrative Assistant to the PSC President and LTRG member.

Ms. Solie also stated that, "A grant coordinator position is vital for the Peru community as they recover from the 2019 Missouri River floods. It takes a significant amount of time to coordinate reports, updates, and information to state and federal agencies. Time that city employees don't have when they are working on day-to-day tasks that are important to the City's continued well-being." The City Council has voted to hire a part-time grant coordinator. This is an important position that will allow the City to continue to meet grant requirements as Peru continues flood recovery and building resiliency. The Grant Coordinator position should be listed on Indeed.com soon, and it is currently advertised in the Nemaha County paper.

Check out the City Hall website. There are announcements, a calendar, and forms you can use for reserving City Hall or getting your dogs tagged. Website information has also been updated.



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Tundra Swan, February 7, 2023

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Auburn, Nebraska 68305



Snow Geese, February 7, 2023



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What I learned at City Council this Month!

Angela Allgood

- 1) Deborah Solie with the Leadership Class that was putting together the Bark Park, informed everyone that things have been moving slower than the class wanted due to the cost of supplies going up and having to fundraise more for the extra money. Deborah did inform everyone that the fence should be up by this summer.
- 2) Their were no bids for the 5th Street Project. There may be many reasons for that such as the time frame of getting things done and much more. The city and all involved are going to look at different time frames and figure out another plan.
- 3) Any 501 C 3 organization can use the City Hall 12 times for free then they will need to pay a fee. Any organization that deals directly with the Peru community (like PCIG, the Trailhead, etc.) will be exempt from the 12 free uses.
- 4) The Animal Control Committee has been busy. The committee sent out letters stating that you can start purchasing your 2023 dog tags as of March 1, 2023. For the 2024 year, all dog tags will be due in January.
- 5) The Animal Control Committee also suggested, and Council approved, that you can have poultry within city limits. You can have a total of 10 females and NO males. It was voted on “poultry” so that does include chickens, ducks, guineas, etc.
- 6) Deborah Solie let the audience know that if anyone knows of anyone that wants to sell their home in Peru to get hold of City Hall. They may qualify for a Purchase, Rehab, Resell Program (more to come on PRR next month). The Council was informed that rental properties are now included as part of the PRR Program. If you have rental property or your home, please call City Hall at 402-872-6685. Homes must be within city limits.
- 7) Council Member Marty Peregoy mentioned that the old slide at the park next to the City Hall has been removed and she would like to see a temporary fence put up to protect kids from getting hurt if they climb the hill. She stated she would eventually like to see a more permanent fence there and maybe have it decorated by one of our many artists in town.
- 8) Council Member Cate Wyckoff talked about better building conditions for the City Maintenance workers. They currently have no building to go in that has heat, restroom facilities or even water availability. She said there were options and she would like to see the Building Committee look into those options a little more.
- 9) The city of Peru had two bids for ground that it owns. The bids were for 4 years. Ashley Parker got the “pasture ground.” Gerald Stukenholtz got the “farm ground.”

You can learn a LOT at City Council meetings! Hope to see you at the next one!



Northridge Church  
Pastor Daniel Hutchison  
Services at Peru City Hall Sunday 10 am



Peru Community Church  
520 Nebraska Street  
Pastors Raymond & Rebecca Girard  
Services - Sunday 10:45 am



St. Clara’s Catholic Church  
604 6th Street  
Pastor Fr. Timothy Danek  
Mass - Sunday 8:30 am  
Confessions - Sunday 8:00-8:20 am



# How Important Those Little Things Are!

Dorothy Rieke, Julian

One of my friends recently commented, “Appreciate the little things; make the most of each day.” What good advice that was! Often we rush through days never taking time to appreciate the little things in our lives. Do you take time to view a sunset? Do you pause to see snow glistening in the sun? Do you watch birds flying across the sky? All of these are little things to be appreciated.

Sometimes the smallest things surrounding us can be the most meaningful and the most impactful. If we fail to notice the little things, we will never truly appreciate our surroundings or see the everyday beauties in the world. Each day make it a practice to look for the beauty in the smallest things, and you will be surprised at the value of this practice.

Someone, along the same lines, once commented “When you run so fast to get somewhere, you miss half the fun getting there.” It is true that when rushing through each day, we do not take opportunities to stop to think, to observe, and to appreciate. This is almost like throwing away a gift.

Ralph Waldo Emerson voiced the same idea when he said, “Guard well your spare moments. They are like uncut diamonds.”

In fact, someone once mentioned that it is in our darkest moments that we see the light. In that case, end your day with a smile and the knowledge that things will be better soon.

Charles Darwin stated, “A man who dares waste one hour of time has not discovered the value of life.” Ask yourself, “Will I be thankful for doing this tomorrow, next week, or even next year?”

It is true that “Time is gold. Treasure it; appreciate it.” Misplaced items are often found easily. However, misspent time is lost forever.

Believe that your life is valuable as well as precious. Help others, learn about who you are, and love all of it. Learn how to live enjoying your days to the fullest extent. The following are some little things you may especially enjoy each day:

- Hearing someone say “I love you” for the first time.
- Seeing puppies playing together.
- The kind words of a stranger on the street.
- The sound of rain hitting the window as you fall asleep.
- The scent of outdoors after a rain.
- Laughing with your friends.
- The smell of cookies baking in the oven.
- Wearing a new sweater.
- Smelling a rose.
- Seeing something that inspires you.

While life may not be of fairytale quality, there is still a magical world out there if we have the patience to see it. Don’t forget to observe the little things; they will make your life more enjoyable.

# Window On Fifth Street

Stephen Hassler, Peru

I often tell people who I know well, that I believe I have the recipe for happiness. It is having someone to love, something to do, and something to look forward to. With all that going for you, how can you not be happy?

I presented that “recipe” as part of a “Window” article almost 20 years ago; so long ago that it was before I began uploading monthly issues to my website. That’s why you won’t find that particular “Window On Fifth Street” article. But you might have heard about it because I’ve heard it repeated in one form or another ever since.

This reminds me of the story of the 100th monkey, which is probably not true, but I believe that once an individual has an idea, it is likely that others will realize it soon after. But that doesn’t mean that if the first individual had not had that idea that the others wouldn’t have realized it. Sooner or later, civilization moves forward.

But never mind. The point is that if you have a loved one, then you are well on your way to being happy, if you’re not already there. Because you can look forward to being with them again, like planning a dinner or a movie. Having a spouse to love, or a cat, a dog, a parrot, anything with a personality, then that’s two out of three. You can be pretty happy with two thirds of the recipe. But realistically, one needs to work to live, especially if one doesn’t have a spouse. So, work to do, i.e., a purpose, plus a spouse and a plan for the future (even if it’s just a movie some weekend afternoon), that’s a recipe for happiness. But the job has to be rewarding, something you really believe in doing. Because on Sunday evening, if you are not looking forward to going to work Monday morning, then you need to make a change in your life. So far I’ve spoken of belief in your work, planning something for the future, and love. Another way to put it is; faith, hope, and charity. Thoughts for Spring planning, perhaps?

# P o e t r y

## CONSTRUCTION

Deep in the dry  
grass, a wren  
wrenches free  
a strand of grass  
from the tough  
tuft growing in  
damp soil. She  
flies to a dense  
bush nearby  
and weaves her  
prize into and  
around the tiny  
nest. Her mate  
arrives with a  
soft and fluffy  
fragment from a  
milkweed plant.  
They are a team  
making a home  
for the babies  
to be born when  
Winter melts away.  
He stops now  
and then to sing  
to the sky and  
his notes flutter  
like tiny feathers  
of pure joy.

## MARCHING TIME

Spring is hiding inside  
flower seeds. They are  
waiting for kind hands  
to place them in warm  
soil, give them a pat  
and a drink, and watch  
them grow.  
It's dark down there.  
Critters are coming  
awake and moving.  
They must bump into  
each other now and  
then, as they navigate  
around roots rapidly  
reaching deeper into  
the rich loam. A fuzzy  
guy with a walnut in  
his teeth scrambles  
up into his big tree.  
He remembered where  
he hid one of the last  
nuts that he buried  
before the first blizzard  
in November. He's  
hungry. He sets his  
alarm for the equinox.  
Time will tell, or maybe  
it will lie little white  
snow flakes.

by Devon Adams, Peru

## BEING BEAUTIFUL

She shimmers in  
the sun, her black  
coat a sheen of  
satin over rippling  
muscles. Like a  
princess in a tall  
tale about desert  
sands, she dances  
and floats on four  
fabulous feet, her  
tail sailing behind  
her, like a wild cloud  
drifting on a breeze.  
Her graceful neck  
arches like a perfect  
statue, with a glossy  
mane waving like a  
flag. But her eyes  
glow with a deep  
fire that sweeps the  
horizon, and she  
sees everything.  
"I am beauty in  
motion. I am an  
Arabian Mare!"

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## WRITING UPSIDE DOWN

If you happen  
to see a piece  
of paper with  
handwriting on  
it, turn it upside  
down.

It looks like  
another language.  
Then, try to read  
it upside down.  
It IS another  
language!

## DAY SLEEP

Cloud shadows  
dapple the green  
grass meadow  
as you lie there  
dozing.  
Scents of clover  
and honeysuckle  
drift in on a breeze.  
Your dog snuggles  
closer, and snores.  
A dream comes  
to take you away,  
and peace covers  
you like a blanket.  
Deep is the rest  
that comes to  
a weary heart.

Share this experience with friends by  
sending them this link;  
**[yourcountryneighbor.com](http://yourcountryneighbor.com)**



## March

Sheila Tinkham, Lincoln

March in rhythm to Mars, the the Roman God  
of war who is March's namesake  
But often aren't we  
at war with ourselves?  
At war with a cold, dank winter, at war with our present  
So March boldly into the hope of a new life, new better habits,  
and a new higher purpose  
March into a new self.  
March into a better you.  
The promise of Spring and the aroma of flower buds blooming...

## St. Patrick's Day

Sheila Tinkham

Listen and you shall hear the call of Erin Go Bragh Ireland for ever,  
For in the whisper, in the trees.  
ST. Patrick, an English bishop, who converted the pagan Irish.  
The shamrock, used to to teach the Trinity to the Irish.  
Snakes that were chased from Ireland

And today We wear our bit of green here in the Midwest to avoid being pinched.  
And eat our corned beef and cabbage, only eaten by American Irish not those in Ireland,

But aren't all of us Irish on March 17th? With luck we might find our pot of Gold.  
And maybe like America itself we can all be Irish for a day, with our corned beef and cabbage  
And with hard work and luck help the leprechauns find our own pot of gold.  
Happy St. Patrick's Day to the best country ever, a hodgepodge of all that is good.  
The United States of America.

One day in early February, there  
were over 400,000 snow geese at  
the Loess Bluffs National Wildlife  
Refuge between Rulo, Nebraska  
and Mound City, Missouri.

And one day in late February,  
there were over one million snow  
geese occupying most of the  
marshy pools.

Tuesday, the 21st was an amazing  
day for me and for any photog-  
rapher or observer present. The  
geese usually fly north by the end  
of February, depending on weather  
conditions.

In recent years, the number of migrating Tundra Swans at the Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge has increased dramatically. A decade ago I would be lucky if I saw more than ten in a season. This Winter over 3000 were counted in one day! And I see many each time I visit.





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# Peru State Men's Basketball



The Peru State athletic department recently announced Roman Gentry as Men's Basketball Head Coach.

PSC v Evangel Univ. Win 76 - 71  
Semifinal Conference Play







# Peru State Women's Basketball





# Peru State College News

## Peru State College Foundation Readies for Productive 2023

The Peru State College Foundation Board of Directors held their first meeting of 2023 this past Saturday (Jan. 28) as they gear up for a busy 2023.

Topping the agenda was election of officers. Leadership of the Board was largely unchanged, with Jeff Greenwald (Class of '71) re-elected chair, and Elton Edmond ('88, Masters '16) re-elected vice chair. Both are Lincoln residents.

Al Urwin ('82) of LaVista, continues as Foundation secretary, while Jeff ('83) and Robin (Nelson '83) Smith of Lincoln serving as co-treasurers. They shared that post last year with Tim ('84) and Cindy (Plantenga '82) Hoffman of Ashland, who remain on the Board.

The Foundation is a private, non-profit corporation whose sole mission is to support Peru State College through receipt and distribution of charitable gifts to support the college. Board members serve on a voluntary basis.

Lori Vrtiska Seibel ('84) of Lincoln was elected to the Board in December and attended her first meeting. Other Foundation Board members include Terri Bishop ('92) of Auburn, Connie Edmond ('87) of Lincoln, Fritz Stehlik ('74) of Omaha, and Ivan Wineglass ('94) of Bellevue.

The Foundation Board heard reports on its primary current fund drive, Project ROAR. The Foundation has a goal to raise \$5 million to support the more than \$15 million dollar project, the largest in Peru State College history.

Project ROAR calls for the first new buildings at Nebraska's first college since construction of the Al Wheeler Activity Center in 1980. Peru State College President Michael Evans told Foundation Board members plans are underway to break ground on the first facility in the spring.

## Peru State College Ranked a Top School for Online Master's in Business for 2023.

Peru State has been ranked as one of the nation's best colleges for online master's programs in business. Just six percent of regionally accredited postsecondary institutions earned a ranking position.

RENO, Nev. (PRWEB) January 16, 2023 – Peru State College has been recognized as one of the best schools for online learning at the master's level by OnlineMastersDegrees.org (OMD). Peru State's business programs earned top honors for overall quality, affordability, and commitment to student success.

See where Peru State ranked below. Best Online Master's Degrees in Entrepreneurship: <https://www.onlinemastersdegrees.org/best-programs/business/entrepreneurship/>

"This year, we focused on the schools making it easier for students to compete in today's increasingly difficult job market," said Kyle Darland, co-founder of OMD. "Each ranked school offers a fully or partially online master's program in business at a time when earning a master's has become a minimum barrier to entry for many." Darland is referencing a recent survey from CareerBuilder, which found that "thirty-three percent of employers are hiring workers with master's degrees for positions that had been primarily held by those with four-year degrees." These employers cited an evolution of the skills needed to perform the jobs as the cause of the shift, and an increase in work quality, productivity, and employee retention as the result.

"Providing students with opportunities to get a master's online is only part of our rankings," said Darland. "Top-ranked schools also had competitive tuition rates and/or scholarships to help drive costs down. And with grocery, gas, and other expenses on everyone's mind right now, an affordable master's is key."

OnlineMastersDegrees.org analyzed more than 7,700 accredited universities by using data pulled from the schools themselves and from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). After the data was compiled, OMD's data science team then applied a proprietary algorithm to rank all qualifying schools for each of the different master's degrees specialties.

Primary data points include:

- Academic counseling services
- Career placement services
- Student/faculty ratio
- Tuition
- Percent of students receiving school-based aid
- Amount of school-based aid per student

To be eligible for ranking, a university must hold active regional accreditation and have at least one partially online master's program in the ranking subject. Just 8 percent of U.S. postsecondary institutions earned a ranking position.

About OnlineMastersDegrees.org: OnlineMastersDegrees.org began in 2020 to support online learning at the master's level. Our user-friendly, research-backed content helps students find scholarships, resources, financial aid, and connect with accredited colleges and universities across the country.

## BOBCAT SOFTBALL HOME GAMES

### FEBRUARY

TUE 28 Briar Cliff Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

### MARCH

SAT 11 College of St. Mary 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

TUE 14 Midland Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

FRI 17 University of Jamestown 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

SAT 18 Hastings College 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

SUN 19 Morningside Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

### APRIL

SUN 2 Culver-Stockton College 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

SAT 8 Missouri Valley College 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

WED 12 Benedictine College 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

SAT 22 Central Methodist Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

SUN 23 Baker Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

SAT 29 William Penn Univ. 2 p.m.  
4 p.m.



## 2023 SEASON

## BOBCAT BASEBALL HOME GAMES

### MARCH

SAT 25 Park Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

MON 26 Park Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

### APRIL

SAT 1 Clarke Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

SUN 2 Clarke Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

SAT 15 Mount Mercy Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

SUN 16 Mount Mercy Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

WED 19 Midland Univ. 2 p.m.

WED 29 Graceland Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

SUN 30 Graceland Univ. 1 p.m.  
3 p.m.

See full schedule for both teams at:  
[WWW.PSCBOBCATS.COM](http://WWW.PSCBOBCATS.COM)

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